CALIBER PRESS

NEGATIVE BURN

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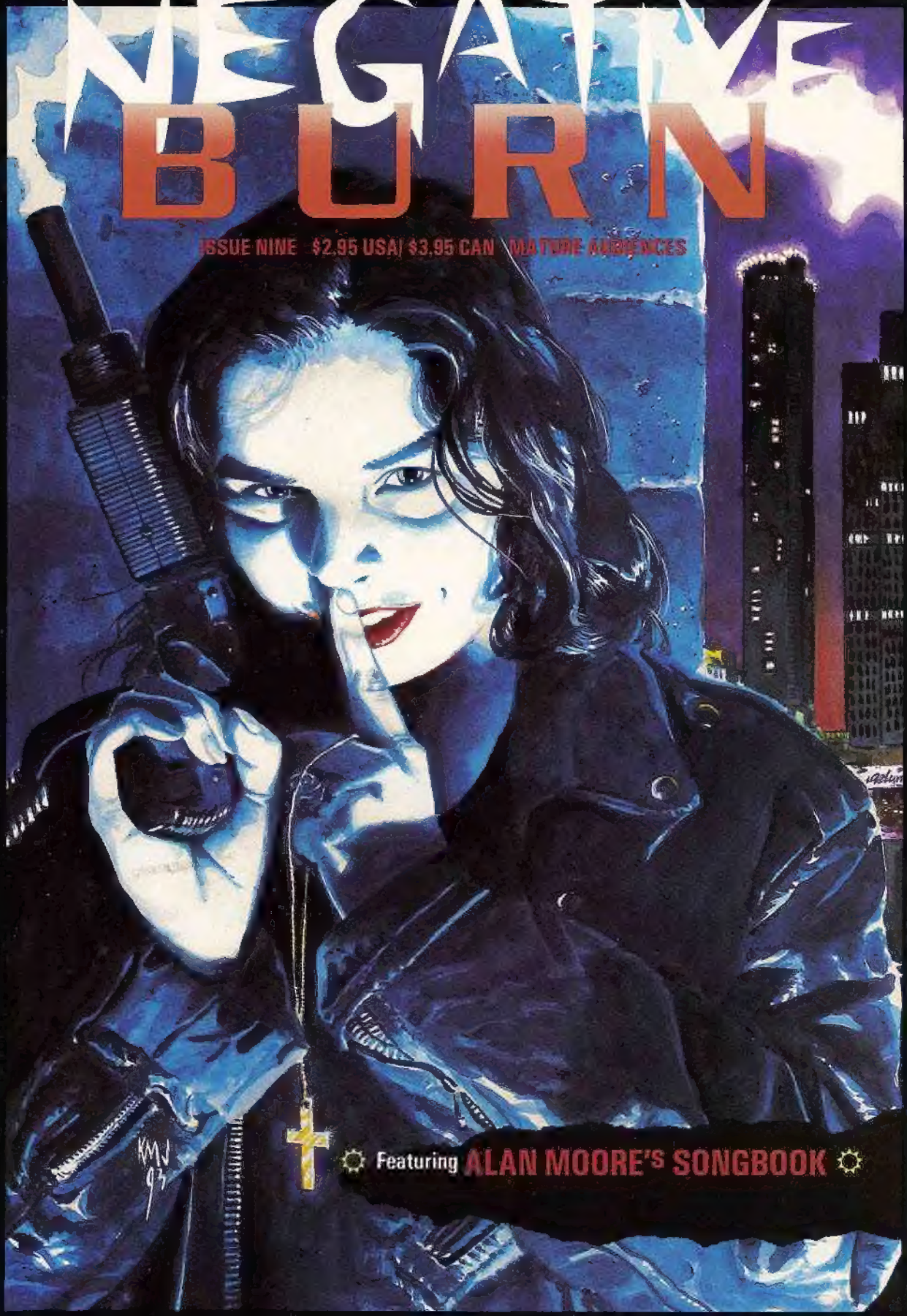

Featuring ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK

CHARLES MOORE • BRIAN BOLLAND • PHILLIP HESTER • KEN MEYER JR. • DAVE DORMAN • DOUG WHEELER

NEGATIVE BURN

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER NINE

an anthology
Joe Pruett /Editor

P.O. Box 672162, Marietta, GA 30067-0037

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illustrated by Gene Gonzales and Tyler Bishop

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illustrated by Ken Meyer Jr.

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illustrated by John Grigni

LOVECRAFT ..... Page 37
written and illustrated by Art Wetherell

Cover Art of DOMINIQUE by Ken Meyer Jr.

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Please make check or money order in U.S. dollars payable to **Joe Pruett.**

P.O.Box 672162, Marietta, GA 30067-0037

"YOU SURE YOU WANNA DO THIS, RUSTY?"
Quik-E-mart
--PASSIN' FAKE LOTTO TICKETS'LL GET YOUR PAROLE REVOKED FOR SURE.
AIN'T YOU BEEN LISTENING? I'LL HAVE A WITNESS!
THE CASHIER WATCHES ME BUY A NEW ONE... THEN I SWITCH IT.
WHOA. CHECK THIS.
Dominique...
SIZE
"size"
I'D LIKE TO RIDE THAT.
FORGET IT, THOSE BIKER CHICKS ARE ALL DIKES.

...DOG GOT MY LEG. I'VE HAD IT WITH REPO WORK.
TURN ON THE PUMPS, PLEASE.
ROUGH NIGHT. TIME FOR THE HEAVY STUFF.
CHOCOLATE!
Hacker's Cigarettes
BEER
PAPER
JUST GET ME HOME. I'VE HAD ENOUGH EXCITEMENT FOR ONE NIGHT.
AHMET
GREAT. NO BIG BLOCKS.

'SCUSE ME-- YOU GOT ANY BIG BLOCKS?
WHASSUP? MY MAN!
PACK O' WINSTONS AND A LOTTO.
HELL...NOBODY EVER WINS, BUT MY OLD LADY WANTS ONE.
QUICK-E mart
AHMET
AM I MISSING THE BIG BLOCKS ...?
UH...RIGHT THERE, LADY. CANDY AISLE.
WATCH THIS, BUD. BETCHA I JUST BLEW A DOLLAR.
SAY, CHIEF-- HOW 'BOUT THOSE PUMPS?
YEAH. HM... GIMME A SEC.

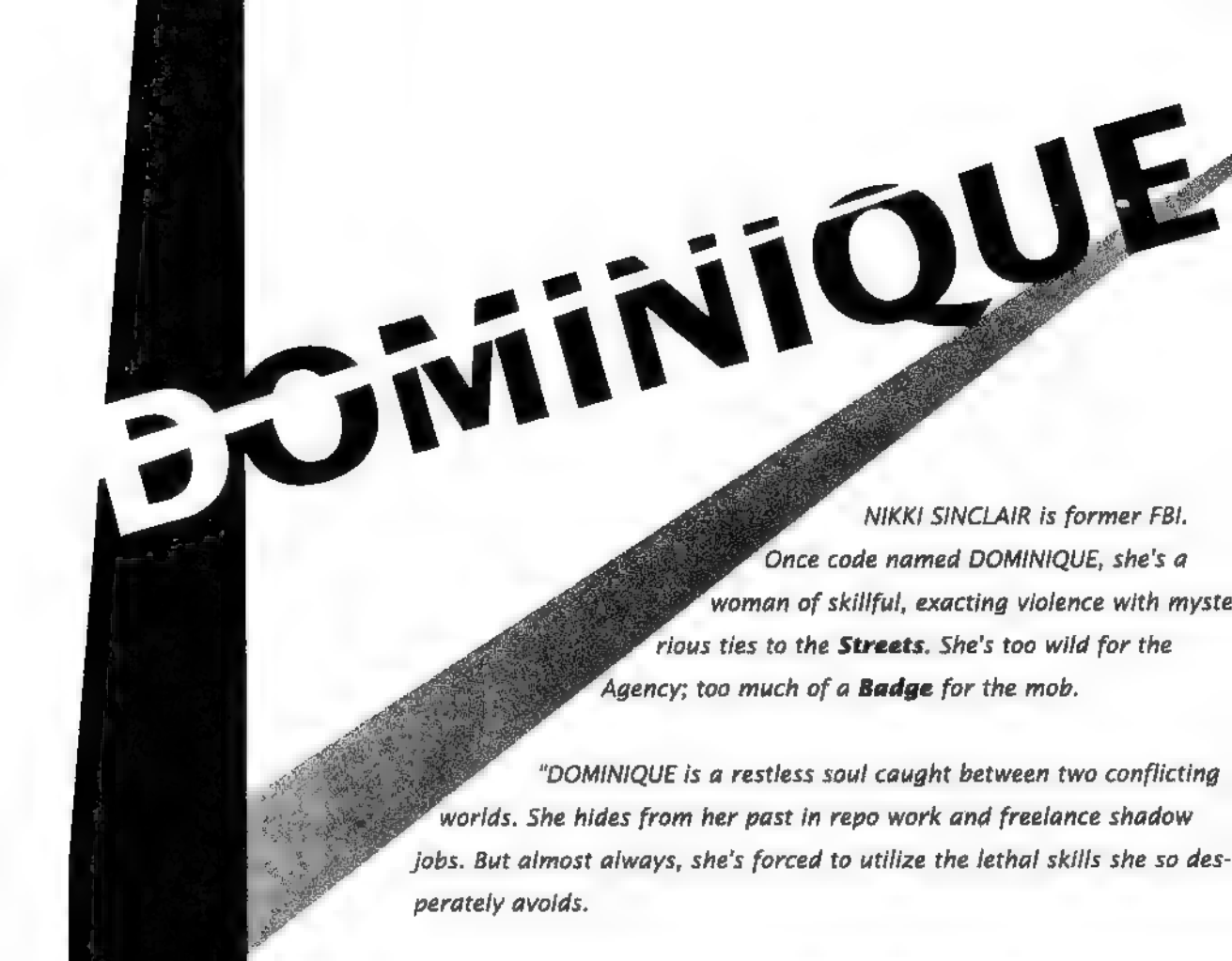
THOSE ARE REGULARS. I WANT A BIG BLOCK.
HEY MAN-- THE PUMPS!
--%#*! FOREIGNERS! WHERE ARE THE DING-DONGS?
Cheese Puff
Cheese Puff
WELL LOOKY HERE! A WINNER!
UH-UH. YOU SWITCHED IT.
LOOK, POP JOCKEY, I WON TWENTY FIVE HUNNERT DOLLARS--
SOMETHING'S WEIRD HERE.
WHAT! YOU TRYIN' TO CHEAT ME ...AHMET?
AHMET?

QUIT THINKING LIKE A COP, NIKKI.
PLEASE. I JUST WANT A BIG BLOCK.
BUY TWO AND STICK 'EM TOGETHER!
Quik-E mart
AHMET
I WANT A BIG BLOCK!
YOU OUTTA DING DONGS, TOO?
MAN, ARE YOU LISTENIN'?
I GOT A WINNER... SEE!
HP
SHIT...
EVERYBODY SHUT UP!

BLAM
EVERYBODY --WHERE I CAN SEE YOU!
I DON'T NEED THIS.
Chips
Chips
SMAK
WHA...NO! THE GUN!
YOU CRAZY? ...GET US KILLED!
YOU ...STUPID... SONOFA...
FKOOM
FKOOM
Campbell's
Chicken Noodle
Campbell's
Tomato
SOUP
DAMN.

NEW!
TRY IT!
BASTARD... SHOT ME...
WIN!
BIG LIGHT BEER
BEER
A .22? THAT'S A CAP GUN! GET OUT HERE--
GREET YOUR CUSTOMER
--NOW!!
Campbell
Chicken
soup
TOK!
TYPICAL MALE.
ALWAYS THE SIZE THING.
SIZE DOESN'T MATTER... (EXCEPT WITH CHOCOLATE)--
BAMF

--IT'S WHAT YOU DO WITH WHAT YOU GOT.
YOU OK?
THINK SO.
YOU A COP, LADY?
NO.
THEY DEAD?
YEAH.
LORD HAVE MERCY, CLOSE RANGE--
--HIS NUMBER REALLY CAME UP, DIDN'T IT?
GEORGIA LOTTERY
YEAH.



NIKKI SINCLAIR is former FBI. Once code named DOMINIQUE, she's a woman of skillful, exacting violence with myste rious ties to the ***Streets****. She's too wild for the Agency; too much of a* ***Badge*** *for the mob.*

"DOMINIQUE is a restless soul caught between two conflicting worlds. She hides from her past in repo work and freelance shadow jobs. But almost always, she's forced to utilize the lethal skills she so des- perately avoids.

"As a series, DOMINIQUE is offbeat crime noir, similar to films such a ***Reservoir Dogs*** *and* ***One False Move****. With a distinct southern flavor, the series is inspired by the quirkiness of writers like* ***Elmore Leonard*** *and the relentless edge of* ***Andrew Vacchs****."*

First seen in *DARK HORSE PRESENTS* #'S 71-73, DOMINIQUE will soon be appearing in a series of one shots from Caliber Press. Covers wil be by **KEN MEYER, JR.** (Check out the gorgeous piece he did for this issue, which will soon be available as a full color T-shirt.). Interiors will feature talented newcomers like **GENE GONZALEZ** and **CHRIS HUNTER.**

We'd love to hear from y'all...Either about DOMINIQUE or the sad absence of crime fiction in the comics medium. Just write us at the NEGA TIVE BURN address or through **CompuServe** at my address number, 73622,1755.

Later,

Chuck & Lisa Moore

MR. MAMOULIAN

GOODNIGHT

2 RYLANT 5 6 87

twilight people

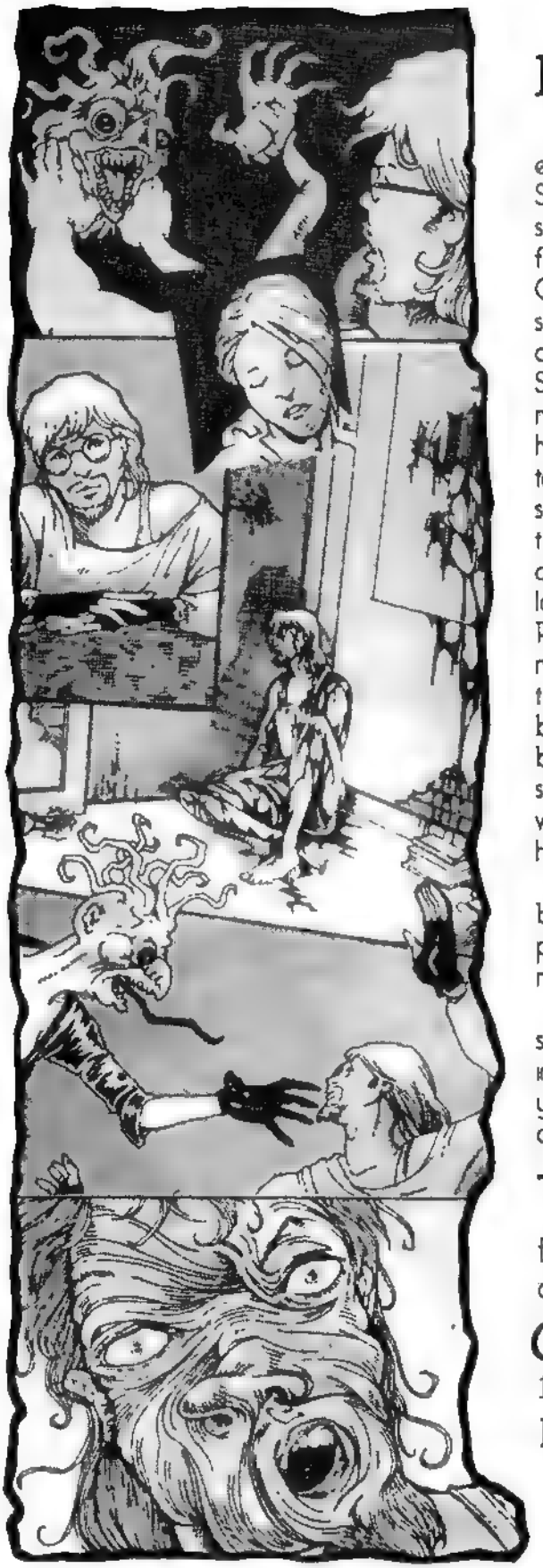
© 1994 Mark Ricketts

The Story So Far...

Book 1

In search of a cheap buzz, Corey and Max, our ill-starred runaways, die after accidentally overdosing on a mixture of Turkish heroin and Ajax. Transported to Hell, they wind up in the company of one Mr. and Mrs. Scratch.

The Scratches, bored with their roles as caretakers of the Netherworld, have devised a game to divert themselves from the earthly banality of death. In the game, fresh arrivals to the Netherworld, the new dead, are set loose in the garden of profane delights as prey. After these unfortunate spirits desperately flee in a futile effort to escape their tormentors, Mr and Mrs. Scratch ride out in pursuit to track them down with the aid of their soul-sniffing hounds of Hell. Following one such brief and unholy hunt, Max is caught and her lifeforce extracted by Mr. Scratch, leaving just enough ectoplasm for her to retain a skeletal form.



Book 2

Determined to recover Max's life essence, Corey enlists the aid of the Scratchs' victims, the Skeleton people, who show him how to enter the dreams of his friend Frank. From the Priest of Bones, Corey learns that his only hope is to somehow convince Frank into drinking demon blood (namely, that of the Black Sisters of the Lamia) to precipitate his metamorphosis into a demigod. Corey hopes to persuade Frank, thus transformed, to join him in his quest to win back Max's soul from Mr. and Mrs. Scratch but something he hadn't accounted for threatens to destroy his plans, something known in the lore of the dead as "The Twisting." As the Priest of Bones intones, "If he (Frank) has not made peace with that which is unholy, there will come The Twisting. His face will begin to turn inside itself until he is breathing out the back of his head. His spine will twist like taffy and his kneecaps will spin around until he is unable to tell if he is coming or going..."

Amidst this chaos, Max is again visited by Mr. Scratch, from whom she receives a peculiar invitation to a party to be held, mysteriously, in her very honor.

Now you know the story so far, the story of Corey and Max and Frank, of immortal souls and demon blood, and you are ready for the next harrowing chapter of...

TWILIGHT PEOPLE

Book 1 and 2 are still available through

Caliber Press
11904 Farmington
Livonia, MI 48150

Send check or money order for $3. per issue

RRRiiiNG!
RiiiNG!
RiiNG!
DAMN!
COMIN'
COMIN'
RiiNG!
WHAT?!

HEY FRANK! LISTEN MAN, I KNOW YOU'RE BUMMED ABOUT COREY AN' MAX AN' THEM BEIN' DEAD AN' ALL SO I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU, ME AN' THE OL' LADY'D GET A LITTLE OILED...
...I GOT SOME CRYSTAL AN' WE COULD DO A ROLLERCOASTER THING, THEN I'LL SAY SOMETHIN' REALLY STUPID AN' JUDY'LL GET PISSED AN' SHE'LL START IN SCREAMIN' AT ME AN', OF COURSE, Y'LL SCREAM BACK AT HER...WAH, WAH, WAH!
BY THE TIME THE SMOKE CLEARS YOU'LL BE HAPPY YOU'RE LIVIN' ALONE AND FEEL BETTER ABOUT YOURSELF... WHAT D'YA THINK BUD?
FRANK? HEY FRANKIE?..
DAMMIT RICH, I CAN'T DRAW BLOOD...
...I SUNK THE RAZOR INTO MY WRIST ABOUT AN INCH DEEP AND THE SKIN JUST GREW BACK. I DON'T BLEED!
OH WOW, THAT'S FRANK... WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS FACE?
Oh that, it's ..

...A little thing called the Twisting, dear
When an angel falls from grace comes the twisting of disgrace where there is but one cure... prayer to Lucifer.
One has to pay to play, you see.
FRANK.. HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?
If your Frank gives himself to the blood and performs a simple rite, well darling, he'll be more than fine... he'll be absolutely divine!!
You have my word. Now, it's time we prettied you up a bit, darling.
SO IF I HELP YOU, YOU'LL HELP FRANK AND COREY?
COREY'S GONNA BE ALL RIGHT, THEN?

Once the bargain is met the [illegible] you to Corey will rejoin the corporeal possessing the wisdom of Paracelsus.
THAT'S Good
You should feel quite honored, Maxine.
Nicky and I fought beside Lucifer in the Great War, you know.
OKAY, YOU GOT A DEAL, BUT IS IT GONNA HURT?
You will be placed in a trance... I assure you that you won't feel anything.

I really wanted you to be a virgin, but I suppose it's not important
I'VE ONLY DONE IT WITH COREY...
I GOTTA SAY I'M PRETTY SCARED
We must prepare, and to do so, you'll need to close your eyes, dear.
"Zimimar, Gorson, Amaymon and Goap have come to celebrate the new son of the morning.
"We must give them something to celebrate..."
"Sleeep my dear.. Sleeeeppp... drift into the velvet... ...into the fog.. into dreamsss.. and when you wake it will be done... forever amen."
AWWW...
NOW MAXIE, WHEN THE MOVIE STARTS, YOU RUN CRYIN' TO THE CANDY COUNTER, 'KAY.
...MOM!

YOU TELL THE MAN BEHIND THE COUNTER THAT YOUR MOMMY GAVE YOU MONEY FOR SUPPER AN' YOU LOST IT IN TH' DARK OL' MOVIE HOUSE.
PFFT
LOTSA TEARS AN' THEY'LL JUST ABOUT GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT, HON.
I'LL BE AT TH' BAR NEXT DOOR, BUT IF THEY TRY TO CLOSE 'FORE I GET BACK YOU TELL 'EM YOUR MOMMY IS COMIN' TO PICK YOU UP..
SHE'S JUST RUNNIN' LATE..
GOT IT KIDDO?
CANNA EAT CANNEE?
...MAMA...
I can't watch, Nicky.
It is the only way, my love.
MAMA?
"Take my seed, little one!"
Nicky, you'll hurt our little surrogate.
Bear me a son, human bitch!
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

LABOR

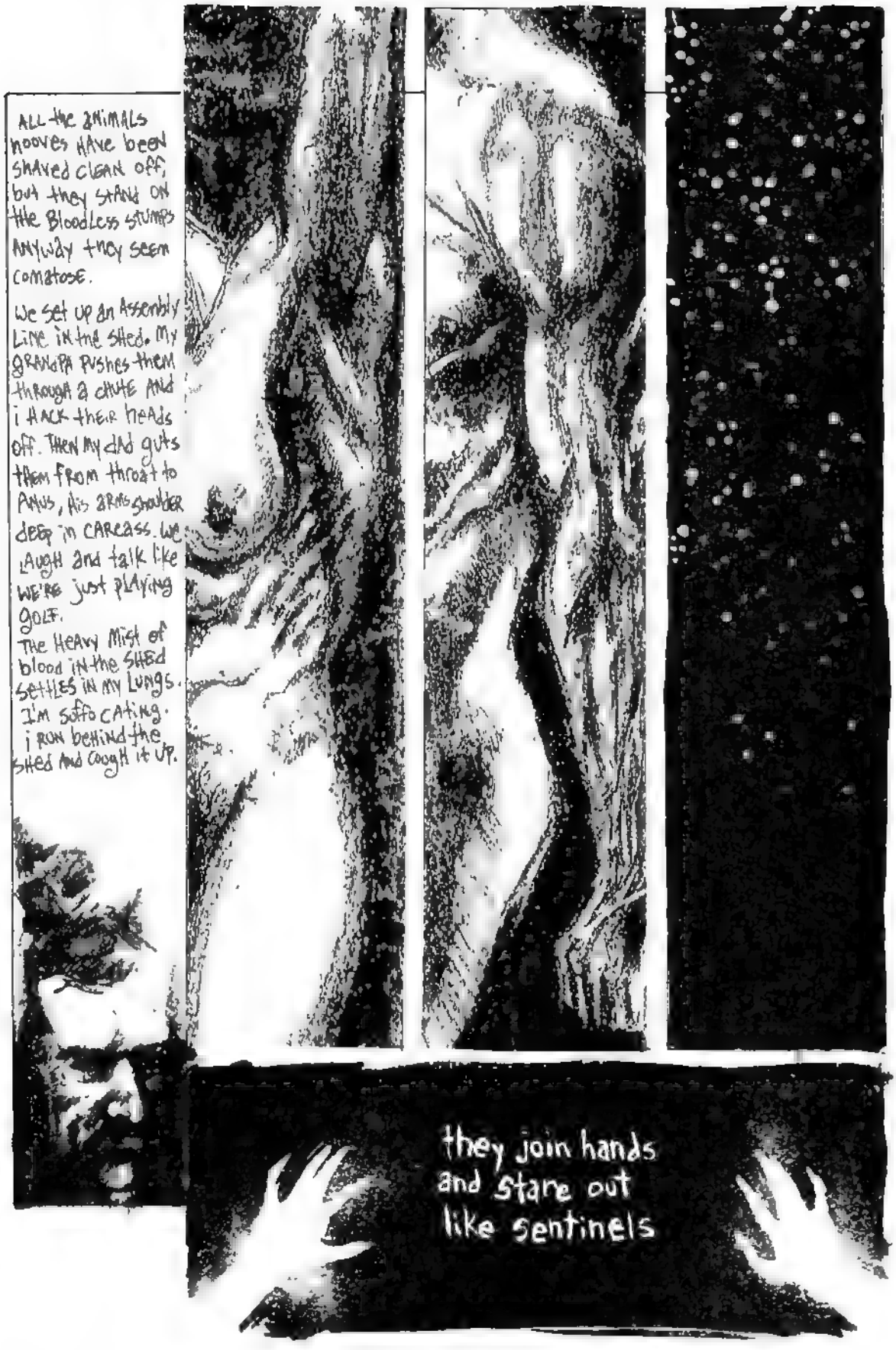
1 9 9 2

PHILLIP · HESTER

My father, grandfather and myself are standing on a flooded golf course. They don't seem to acknowledge that the fairway is underwater. They want to play nine holes, but I don't. I've never played before and they're experts. So dad and grandpa say "Let's go to work then."

On the practice green there's a sun-bleached shed full of cattle and hogs.

And axes.

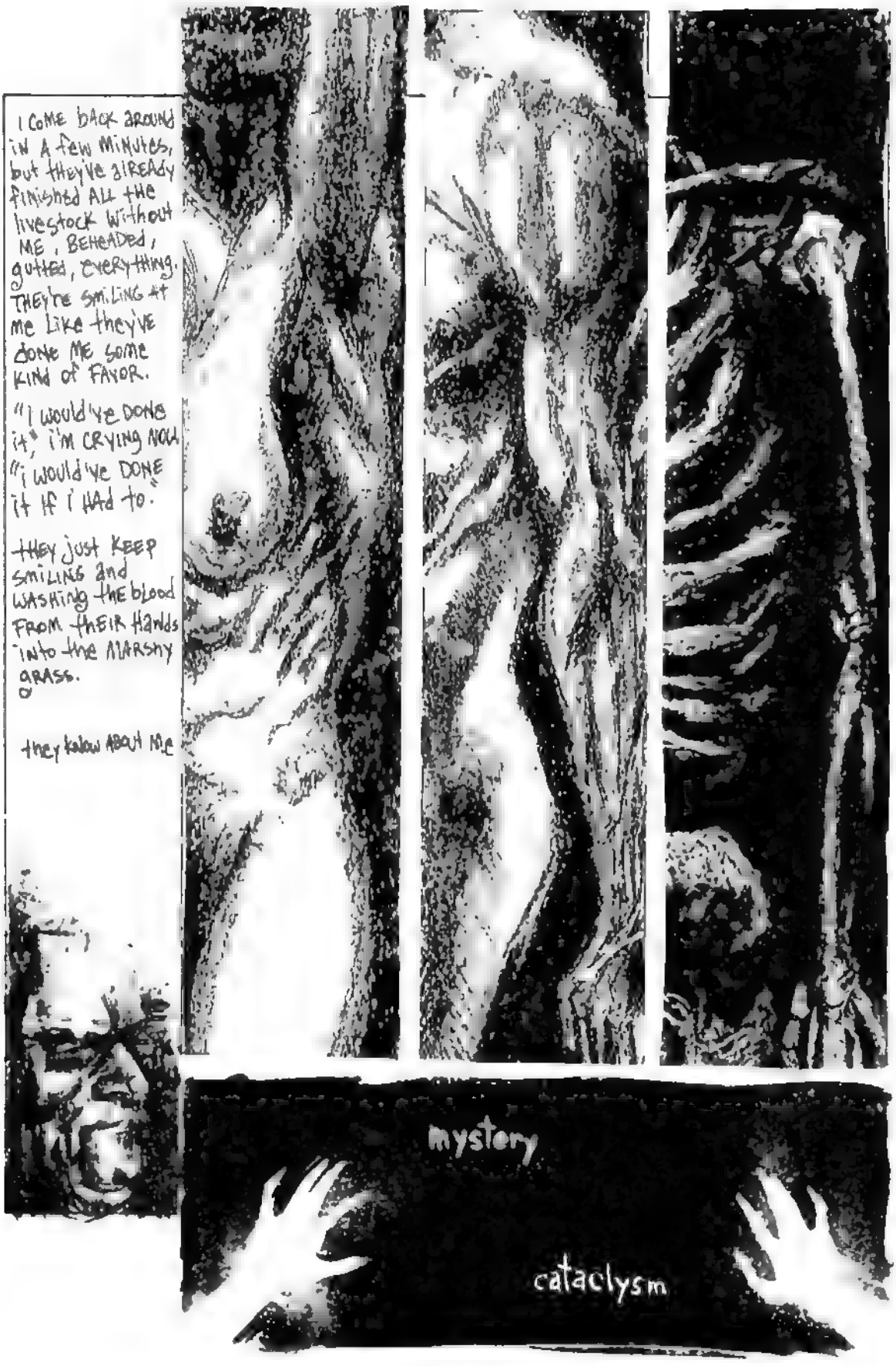

ALL the animals hooves have been shaved clean off, but they stand on the bloodless stumps anyway they seem comatose.
We set up an assembly line in the shed. My grandpa pushes them through a chute and i hack their heads off. Then my dad guts them from throat to anus, his arms shoulder deep in carcass. We laugh and talk like we're just playing golf.
The heavy mist of blood in the shed settles in my lungs. I'm suffocating. i run behind the shed and cough it up.
they join hands and stare out like sentinels

I come back around in a few minutes, but they've already finished all the livestock without me, beheaded, gutted, everything. They're smiling at me like they've done me some kind of favor.

"I would've done it," I'm crying now. "I would've done it if I had to."

They just keep smiling and washing the blood from their hands into the marshy grass.

They know about me

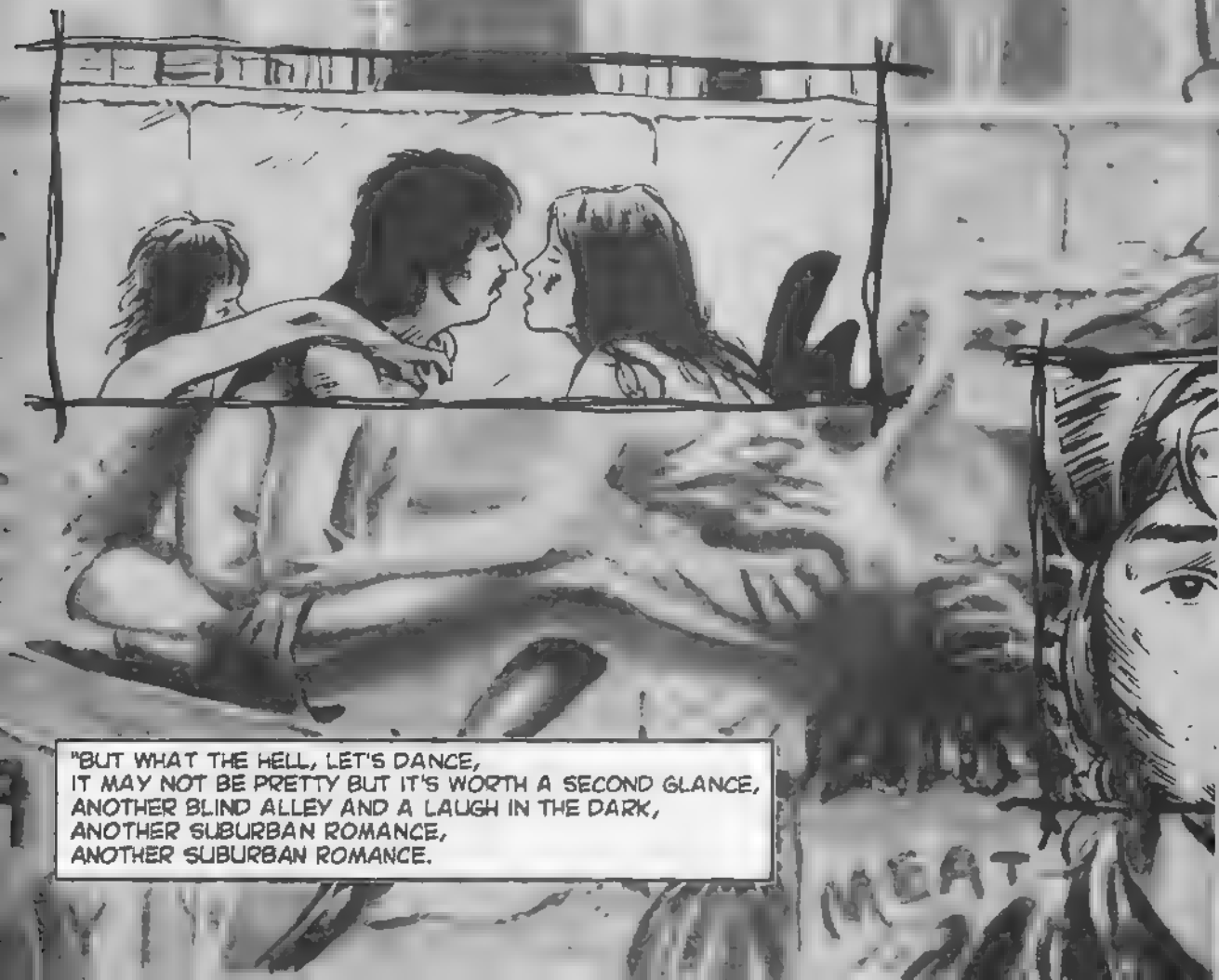


ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK

ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE

"DOWN HERE THE MURDERS DON'T HAVE MOTIVES,
DOWN HERE THE PASSIONS DON'T HAVE NAMES,
AND ALL OF THOSE FIRE-TRAP TENEMENTS,
THEY STAND AROUND LIKE CATHOLIC MARTYRS:
THEY'RE JUST WAITING FOR THE FLAMES.

"OUTSIDE, THE BOYS ARE CARVING EASTERHOUSE SUNSETS
ON EACH OTHER IN THE PARK,
AND THERE'S SCHOOLGIRLS GET LOST IN THE HEAT-HAZE
BREAK DOWN IN REEKING SUBWAYS,
LIKE A CHURCH OF BROKEN HEARTS.
AND POLICE FEVER CUTS THROUGH THE STREETS LIKE A KNIFE,
AND ONCE YOU STEP OUTSIDE, YOU'RE OUTSIDE FOR THE REST
OF YOUR LIFE.



"BUT WHAT THE HELL, LET'S DANCE,
IT MAY NOT BE PRETTY BUT IT'S WORTH A SECOND GLANCE,
ANOTHER BLIND ALLEY AND A LAUGH IN THE DARK,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE.

"THERE'S LOVE IN THE TALL STEEL WHERE THE MEN
DON'T ASK QUESTIONS AND THE GIRLS HAVE DIRTY HAIR,
THEY COME SILENTLY, CLASPED IN A DOORWAY,
VANISH ALONG EMPTY HIGHWAYS,
ON A STREET-CAR NAMED DESPAIR.
AND THE LIGHTS NEVER CHANGE AND YOU CAN'T SEE THE SIGNS,
AND ONCE THEY'VE GOT YOUR NAME, PAL, IT'S JUST A MATTER
OF TIME.

"BUT WHAT THE HELL, LET'S DANCE,
IT MAY NOT BE A SURE THING
BUT AT LEAST IT'S HALF A CHANCE
ANOTHER COLD HAND SHAKE,
A CAR CRASH BALLET,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE

"OUT IN THE STREET, THEY'RE DISCUSSING THE HEAT,
OR ALL THOSE SUICIDES DOWNTOWN,
LEGENDS HAUNT ALL THE ESCALATORS,
WAIT BY THE MOVING STAIRCASE,
TILL ONE DAY IT TAKES THEM DOWN,
TO WHERE DREAMS AND BLUE JEANS CAN
ATTRACTIVELY FADE,
A DOOR SWINGS SHUT BEHIND, AND A SILENCE
FALLS ON THE ARCADE.

"BUT WHAT THE HELL, LET'S DANCE,
AT LEAST IT'S A LIVING. ONE MORE DEFIANT STANCE,
MORE FINAL SOLUTIONS, A KISS IN THE BLITZ,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE,
ANOTHER SUBURBAN ROMANCE.

"DOWN HERE THE BOOK-SHOPS DON'T SELL FICTION,
HERE PAIN IS JUST AN ALSO-RAN,
AND THE CRACK-TEAMS AND THE CRYSTALHEADS,
THEY STAND ROUND LIKE CRUCIFIXION CROWDS:
THEY'RE JUST WAITING FOR THE MAN."

dAve doRman

Detail pencil preliminary for "Baking The Cake" collectors print from The Words and Pictures Museum.

Finished pencil art for San Diego Con '92 charity auction donation.

Sketchbook

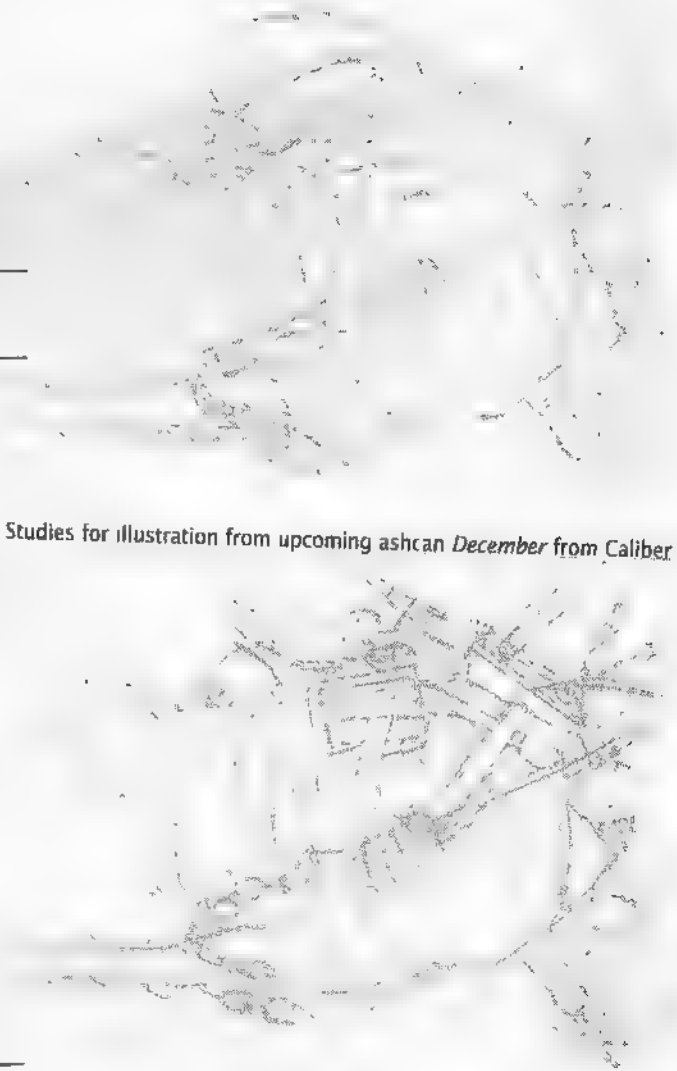
All artwork and characters © 1994 Dave Dorman.

Detail figure study for "Waiting For Indy" collectors print from Rolling Thunder Graphics.

Detail pencil figure study for "Afghan Rebel".

Detail pencil preliminary for cover art of *Pale Companion* science fiction novel from Berkeley Books.

Pencil preliminary for *Roadkill* collector card from Caliber Press.



Studies for illustration from upcoming ashcan *December* from Caliber Press.

CLASSICS DESECRATED

FAY WRAY MEETS THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

WRITER: DOUG WHEELER
ARTIST: DAVE GATZMER

PROFESSOR HOPE, WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THESE LARGE BI-PEDAL TRACKS?
HMMMM, THEY'RE TOO LARGE TO BE HUMAN. BUT NO ANIMALS ARE SUPPOSED TO INHABIT THE HIMALAYAS AT THIS ALTITUDE...
"...I CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THIS PRINT WAS MADE BY NO CREATURE KNOWN TO MAN!
MISS WRAY, AREN'T YOU FREEZING IN THAT SOUTH SEAS OUTFIT?
IT'S THE COSTUME FROM MY LAST MOVIE. THE DIRECTOR ASKED ME TO WEAR IT.
WELL, WE'D BEST KEEP MOVING, AND BE CAREFUL-- THE LEAST SOUND COULD TRIGGER AN AVALANCHE ABOVE US.
ROWWRRR!
RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
THE END

ADMINISTRATIVE

CLEARED EXCEPTIONALLY
- ☐ DEATH OF OFFENDER
- ☐ PROSECUTION DECLINED
- ☐ EXTRADITION DENIED
- ☐ JUVENILE, NO CUSTODY
- ☒ NOT CLEARED EXCEPTIONAL

EXCEPTIONAL CLEARANCE DATE

ARREST REPORT

Standardized Report Form

Case Number # 93-1033

Page # 1

- ☒ Initial Report
- ☐ Modify Report
- ☐ Delete Report

ORI # 9 7 2 1 0 2

Agency Name: Metro Police Department

TYPE OF REPORT

- ☐ PERSONS
- ☐ PROPERTY
- ☐ INFORMATION
- ☐ VEHICLE
- ☐ ARREST
- ☐ PHONE REPORT
- ☐ JUVENILE
- ☒ CHILD ABUSE
- ☐ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- ☐ ARSON
- ☐ OTHER

SCRIPTER (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE): Hale, Beverly, A.

SCRIPTER (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE): Moe, Michael, B.

ARTIST (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE): Grigni, John

EDITOR (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE): Moore, Charles & Pruett, Joe

CASE NO. 93-1033. TYPE OF INJURY: Aggravated Assault.

WANTED

CLASSIFICATION: Assault on a minor. IBR CODE: 13A.

HOW'S IT COMING?

SLOW. REPORT'S TOUGHER THAN I THOUGHT.

JUST DO IT LIKE WE AGREED.

7/22/93. THURSDAY. 3:30 P.M. VICTIM'S NAME: Price, Brandy L.

PERP STIL- SCREAMING LAWSUIT?

DON'T SWEAT IT. IT'S HANDLED. ALL BUT THE PAPERWORK.

AUTO MART
AUTO MART
WHILE ON PATROL, OFFICER ESPINOZA RESPONDED TO A CALL--
...AND NOW MY KID WANTS BALLET LESSONS.
AT LEAST IT'S INSIDE! MINE PLAY SOCCER. NINETY-FIVE OUTSIDE AND THEY PLAY SOCCER.
--DISPATCHING HIM TO SCENE OF AN ALLEGED CHILD BEATING.
BASE TO UNIT FOUR. SEE THE WOMAN, 1430 MAPLE...
10-4, BASE. UNIT FOUR OUT.
UPON ARRIVAL, OFFICER ESPINOZA CALLED FOR BACKUP.
OFFICER ESPINOZA OBSERVED SUSPECT--
REPEATEDLY STRIKING A FEMALE CHILD--
--WITH A CLOSED FIST.

OFFICER ESPINOZA IDENTIFIED SELF AS POLICE OFFICER--
--AND ORDERED SUSPECT TO DESIST.
POLICE! GET OFF THE KID!
WHILE OFFICER ESPINOZA QUESTIONED SUSPECT--
WHATHE FUCK YOU DO THAT FOR?
HANDS ON YOUR HEAD, MAGGOT!
--THIS OFFICER EXAMINED THE VICTIM.
VICTIM'S INJURIES REQUIRED EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION.
--RESCUE UNIT--NOW!
SUSPECT WAS EXTREMELY UNCOOPERATIVE.
HEY! LEMME GO! I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN'.
YOU CALL ALMOST KILLING A KID NOTHING?

OFFICER ESPINOZA READ SUSPECT HIS RIGHTS.
THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY. I GOT RIGHTS!
YOU'VE GOT THE RIGHT TO SHUT UP.
SUSPECT STATED THAT THE INJURIES WERE ACCIDENTAL--
SHE TR PPED, SEE. I JUST TRIED TO CATCH HER.
HOW'D SHE TRIP?
THIS OFFICER RENDERED FIRST AID TO VICTIM.
THERE, HONEY, YOU'LL BE FINE. THE MED CS ARE ON THEIR WAY.
POLICE
THAT HE WAS WATCHING TV WHEN THE CHILD RAN OUT THE DOOR--
I WANT MOMMY.
SHUT UP, YA CRYBABY!
--AND THAT HE WAS BABY-SITTING WHILE THE MOTHER WENT SHOPPING.
SUSPECT STATED THAT HE TRIED TO CATCH THE CHILD BEFORE SHE GOT HURT.
I HATE YOU!
GODDAMN BRAT! I'LL TEACH YOU MANNERS...

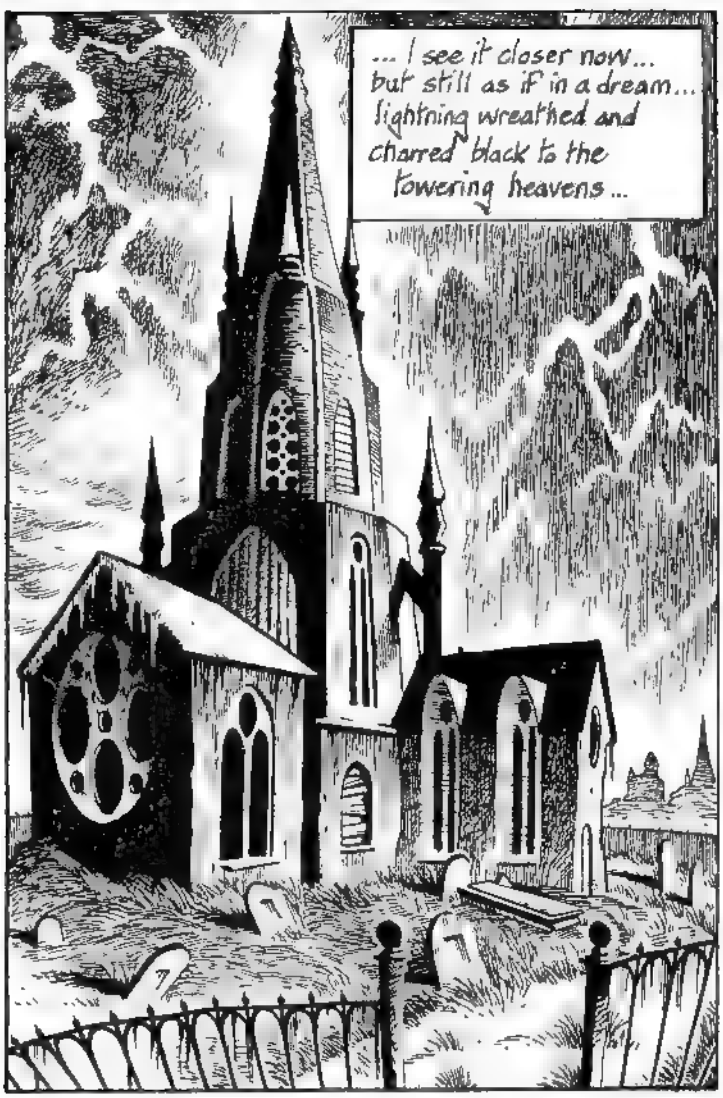
MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ARRIVED AT 3:55 PM.
WHILE THIS OFFICER RENDERED ASSISTANCE TO THE EMTS.
I DON'T KNOW, LOOKS LIKE HE BROKE EVERY BONE IN HER FACE.
OFFICER ESPINOZA TOOK STATEMENTS FROM WITNESSES--
WE SAW HIM, OFFICER, HE HIT THAT LITTLE GIRL...
AND IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME EITHER...
WITNESSES DISPUTED SUSPECT'S STORY.
ALWAYS SLAPPING THAT CHILD. AND WE'VE HEARD HER SCREAMING LATE AT NIGHT.
SHUT UP BITCH! ALWAYS MAKIN' TROUBLE!
VICTIM WAS TRANSPORTED TO METRO HOSPITAL.
SUSPECT DENIED WITNESSES' ALLEGATIONS.
YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN'! YOU A.IN'T HEARD NOTHIN'! UNDERSTAND?
THAT'S ENOUGH, BENKINS. THANKS, LADIES.

CONFRONTED WITH WITNESSES' STATEMENTS--
I'M TELLIN' YA, ALL I DID WAS TRY TO CATCH THE KID.
...WITH YOUR FIST? GIVE IT UP --I SAW YOU!
SUSPECT FINALLY ADMITTED ASSAULTING VICTIM.
SO I SLAPPED HER A LITTLE, I GOTTA RIGHT TO WATCH THE TUBE IN PEACE--
AT THAT POINT, SUSPECT ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE CUSTODY.
WHEN CAPTURED, SUSPECT CONTINUED TO RESIST ARREST--
I GOT YOU MOTHERFUCKERS NOW —POLICE BRUTALITY! I'LL OWN YER GODDAMN DEPARTMENT!
--AND WAS SUBDUED BY BOTH OFFICERS.
OFFICER ESPINOZA TRANSPORTED SUSPECT TO HEADQUARTERS.
YOU CAN'T DO THIS. I'LL SUE YER ASSES OFF!
ANYONE ASKS US, YOU FELL OFF THE CURB.

THIS OFFICER STAYED TO NOTIFY VICTIM'S MOTHER--
WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAPPENED?
I'M AFRAID YOUR DAUGHTER HAS BEEN HURT, MA'AM.
--AND TRANSPORT HER TO HOSPITAL IF NECESSARY.
WHERE'S CLINT? IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIM?
HE'S THE ONE WHO HURT HER, MA'AM. HE'S IN JAIL.
VICTIM'S MOTHER ASKED TO BE TRANSPORTED TO STATION--
WHAT ABOUT YOUR DAUGHTER?
IF I DON'T GET CLINT OUT FIRST, I WON'T HAVE MONEY TO PAY THE HOSPITAL.
TO POST SUSPECT'S BAIL.
WANTED
CHILD ABUSE
...BUT HE'LL KILL ME IF I DON'T GET HIM OUT!
SORRY. CAN'T RELEASE HIM UNTIL HE'S ARRAIGNED.
VICTIM'S MOTHER THEN DECLINED TO PRESS CHARGES.
IF I DON'T, YOU HAVE TO LET HIM GO.
IF YOU WON'T, THE D.A. WILL. WE HAVE WITNESSES.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. HE GIVES US MONEY TO LIVE ON. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. NOT AFTER THIS!

THUD!
REPORTS FROM THE HOSPITAL LIST VICTIM IN CRITICAL CONDITION.
CASE NO. 93-1033...
HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO WRITE THIS?
CASE NO. 93-1033...
...VICTIM'S NAME: Price, Brandy L...
YOU'RE SURE?
I TOLD YOU, IT'S HANDLED.
SUSPECT IS BEING HELD IN CUSTODY PENDING ARRAIGNMENT.
POLICE
COP CALLED HIM A BABY KILLER...
FUCKIN' ANIMAL...
I GOT A KID SISTER...
BRIAN ROBBINS, PATROLMAN.
-END-

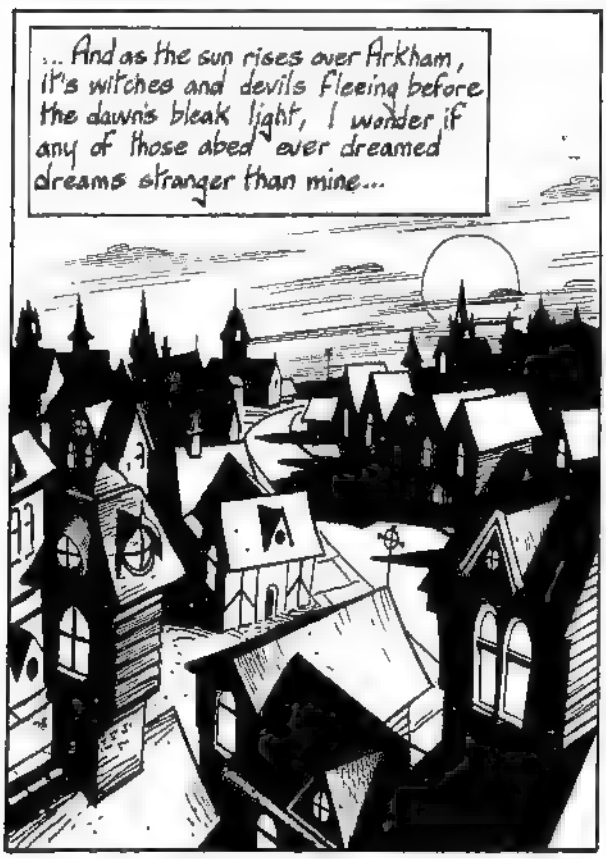
..All red and golden and lovely flame the windows in that tower on Federal Hill where poor Blake met his doom...
for H.P.L.


... I see it closer now... but still as if in a dream... lightning wreathed and charred black to the towering heavens...

... And there! Old dear Kingsport at Yuletime... and that procession of cloaked figures... I was one in their number...

Was this the house of Keziah Mason, wherein I spent nights with strange geometries as my bed-mate?

The house of the Terrible Old Man hides no secrets from me now, within it's ancient timbers...


... And as the sun rises over Arkham, it's witches and devils fleeing before the dawn's bleak light, I wonder if any of those abed ever dreamed dreams stranger than mine...

...Or ever guessed my truest form..!
Art Wetherell '93

Carl Pietrantonio
517 Idylwood Lane
Laredo, Texas 78041

Dear Joe, Charles and folks,

What a beautiful cover on Negative Burn # 4! I cannot exactly explain why I like it so much, I just do. Very well laid out and the colors are terrific. Not over done to the point of garishness though.

As far as the insides, I will reserve judgment on THE TRIGGER MAN. I didn't think that the prologue flowed very well, but since it is a prologue, I'll wait and see what happens next.

As far as the best story and the best character I have yet seen in this title, KILROY IS HERE was an incredibly moving tale. I hope that there will be many more stories featuring this character. I was especially amazed to find that this was a true story! It's shameful that this kind of thing has ever happened in this country, let alone anywhere in the world.

MR. MAMOULIAN was a treat as always. I like these little one pagers. Breaks up the comic and is always entertaining. I wish I could say the same thing for THE BEHEADING, but I did not like it at all.

DEAD FLOWERS gets my vote for weirdest story in this issue, by far! I liked it though. Dreadfully scary in its own horrid way, especially the remembrances of his childhood where he was tormented and hurt by the other kids. Kids are so cruel sometimes and it's a damn shame.

CLASSICS DESECRATED was funny. I hope to see more of these in the future.

I liked some of the things in here and some I did not. That is the way that it should be. If an anthology does not have the range beyond any one reader, it won't have enough range to appeal to enough people to expose them to many different things. You guys are all doing a great job and I hope that you keep it up. I try to talk this title up whenever I get the chance. You guys are taking chances and are also producing some great stuff here. Keep up the good work and I will keep buying this title.

Until next time....

Thanks again for you comments, Carl. We've gotten quite a few compliments on Craig Hamilton's cover art. I'll see if we can weasel another cover from him sometime in the near future. I hope you keep enjoying our regular features "Mr. Mamoulian" and "Classics Desecrated," and maybe P. Craig Russell's "Erl King" (from NB #8) was more to your liking. I also sincerely appreciate your comments on my "Kilroy" story. It was a story I wanted to tell and I'm glad it touched you as much as it did me. It's sad that even in this country you have to sometimes dig for the truth.

On a side note, regarding my "Rosewood" story from NB #4, I just read this in the Tuesday, December 28th edition of THE ATLANTA JOURNAL AND CONSTITUTION: "**ROSEWOOD REVIEWED:** Seven decades after what may have been **Florida**'s most shameful incident of bigotry and mob violence, a state study has pieced together details from news clippings and the memories of survivors. The 93-page report, released last week, documents a rampage that virtually destroyed **Rosewood**, a tiny town near **Cedar Key** about 100 miles north of **Tampa**. The study documents that eight people were killed during the racial violence of New Year's week 1923—six blacks and two whites—and the rest of the black community of Rosewood was driven from the area by white mobs. The study by five professors was authorized by state House Speaker Bo Johnson. Lawmakers and victims' descendants will meet in January to discuss proposals for an official apology, a memorial and compensation for families of those dislocated by the conflict."

Simon Christopher
35 Reid Court
Guleph, Ontario
N1G 3R6
CANADA

Dear Negative Burn,

Let me start off by saying that I enjoy the book immensely. I am a fan of the Vertigo line, and I read in an interview in Comic Shop News that this book would appeal to me. I must say, it's the best new anthology I've seen in a while. I enjoy Brian Bolland's "Mr. Mamoulian" and Phillip Hester's "Boneshaker." I hope you have a long life ahead of you and continue with the quality you have thus far.

I was curious as to whether you accept submissions for NEGATIVE BURN. I am hoping to "break" into the comic business but, since I don't have any real desire to work for Marvel or DC, I don't really know how to go about it. I figure I should try my hand at some short pieces and see what happens. Assuming you do take submissions, or at least look at them, what would you expect? I would think, if it were to be included in NEGATIVE BURN, a four to six page, self-contained story would be sufficient. I also assume that you would want to actually see the completed work before making any publishing commitments (sort of like a magazine buying a short story from a young fiction writer). Please send me any requirements you might have for submissions and I will try my hand at doing a piece that will blow your figurative socks off. Thank you for your time, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Glad to see that you're enjoying NEGATIVE BURN, Christopher. As you can tell, Phillip Hester's "Boneshaker" made it's return to these pages in this issue. There are two more chapters left to go that Phillip's working on between juggling Vertigo's SWAMP THING and other commitments. We'll have them here as soon as possible.

Since I get a lot of submissions each month I think this will be a good time to go over all the details. First of all, to be perfectly honest, unless someone can "blow (my) figurative socks off" with their proposal the chances right now of me accepting said proposal is pretty nil. I've actually already got enough material to last me until early 1995. This is not to say that there is no chance to get into NEGATIVE BURN until 1995, but the odds are pretty low unless your work is either wonderful or you're a creator I ask to be in the book. What you said about a short 4-6 page completed piece for me to look over is the ideal submission. I'm not looking to pair partners up on projects. I just don't have the time. In addition to my editing duties on NEGATIVE BURN and BLACK MIST, my writing chores on the upcoming KILROY IS HERE series, my assisting on Bob Burden's FLAMING CARROT, and the numerous other projects I have going on, I have a regular full-time job for a seminar company. So, unfortunately, answering submissions is low on my list of priorities. I do answer each one individually, but sometimes it may take a little while for me to do so. So if you send in a submission just be patient with me and I will respond.

'93 Atlanta Dragon Con Quick Sketch Winners

Last July, Charles Moore, associate editor of NEGATIVE BURN, was asked to be a judge at the annual "Quick Sketch" contest at the Atlanta Dragon Con/Comic Expo. Below are the two winners and the honorable mentions.

WINNER
Josh Da
Age 12
Norcross, GA

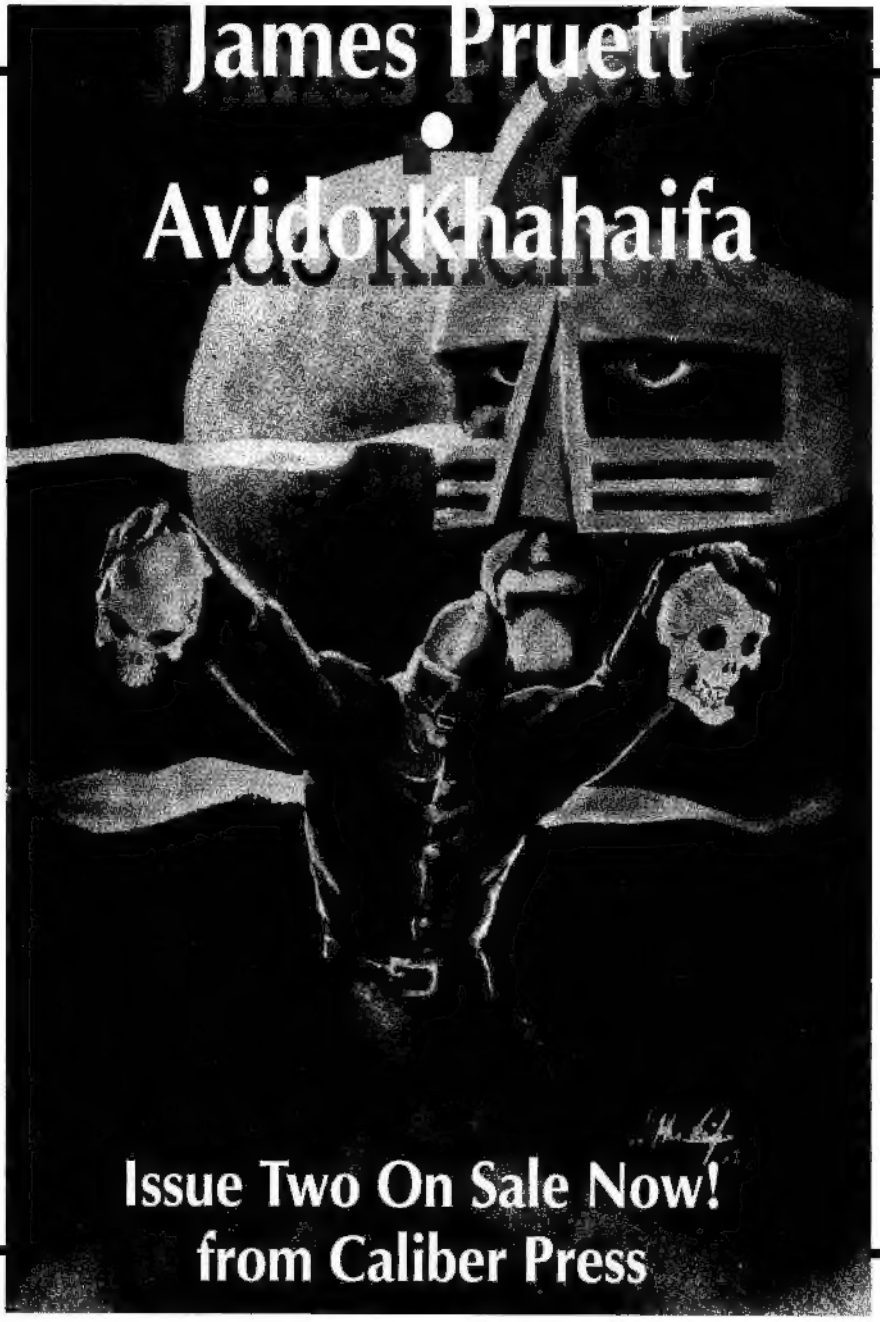
HONORABLE MENTION
Tom Gorman
Age 23
Savannah, GA

HONORABLE MENTION
Adam Fox
Age 20
Riverdale, GA

WINNER
Michael Stribling
Age 23
Savannah, GA

Be sure not to miss this year's show, July 15-17, at the Atlanta Hilton Hotel Downtown.

BLACK MIST



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NEGATIVE BURN

Created and Written by
Joe Pruett

Illustrated by
Ken Meyer Jr.

Cover by
Brian Bolland

Kilroy Is Here © 1994 by Joe Pruett, art © 1994 by Brian Bolland.

"Appropriately somber, with an unusual sense of history,
it promises mystery, tragedy, and a certain painful catharsis.
This one's definitely worth a look."

Paul Chadwick
CONCRETE

Special No. 0 Issue
On sale this May from Caliber Press